

the Interview Summary), applicant respectfully submits the following remarks:

As noted in applicant's Amendment filed October 29, 2007, the '243 patent is incorporated in the '625 application by reference. The currently amended independent claims of the '625 application are consistent with the copolymer compositions of the '243 patent claims. Further, the following detailed description of the copolymer composition from the specifications of '243 patent clearly states that the hydrophilic portion of the copolymer can comprise other monomers besides acidic monomers.

"The graft copolymer suitable for use in this invention has a hydrophilic polymeric main chain and a hydrophobic polymeric side chain (FIG. 1). The main chain is comprised of monomeric units having acidic groups and optionally neutral monomeric units. The preferred hydrophobic side chain moiety is polystyrene. The graft copolymer is prepared by free radical initiated polymerization of a polystyrene macromonomer having an ethylenically, unsaturated functional group (FIG. 2) with the acidic and neutral hydrophilic comonomers. The acidic comonomers suitable for preparation of the graft copolymer include acrylic acid, methacrylic acid, itaconic acid, 2-acrylamido-2-methyl-propane sulfonic acid, and 2-sulfoethyl methacrylate. The neutral comonomers of the main chain may include acrylamide, methacrylamide. 2-

hydroxyethyl methacrylate, N,N-dimethylacrylamide, polyethylene glycol monomethacrylate, and glyceryl methacrylate. The method of preparation of the graft copolymer for use in this invention is analogous to that for poly(N,N-dimethylacrylamide-g-styrene) as disclosed in R. Milkovich, et al., U.S. Pat. No. 4,085,168, which is incorporated herein by reference.

"The monomeric moieties of the graft copolymer are selected to perform the needed functions. The acidic and neutral hydrophilic monomeric units provide the hydrophilicity to absorb aqueous fluids, whereas the polystyrene graft chains contribute to the integrity and water insolubility of the copolymer, thus resulting in a water swollen but insoluble jelly like mass in the biological environment. The acidic functionality of the copolymer, in addition, contributes to adhesion to the mucosal surfaces so as to attain the necessary residence time of the gel. Release of the pharmacological agent from the swollen gel occurs gradually, by a process of diffusion. The hydrophilic neutral comonomer contributes to modification of the hydrophilicity and polarity of the graft copolymer for optimizing solubility of the pharmacological agents in it. The relative proportions of the three types of monomers may vary within certain limits. The proportion of polystyrene macromonomer may vary from about 1 to about 20 percent by weight, optionally from 1 to 10 percent by weight, and preferably, from 1 to 5 percent by weight, based on the total weight of the copolymer. The ethylenically unsaturated monomer containing acidic groups may vary from 10 to 90 percent by weight of the copolymer. Finally, the

neutral hydrophilic monomer may vary from 0 to 89 percent by weight of the copolymer." ('243 patent; Col. 4, lines 21-65).

Since the '243 patent is incorporated by reference in the '625 application, there should be no ambiguity and no room for any other interpretation regarding the monomeric ingredients and their proportions within the copolymer.

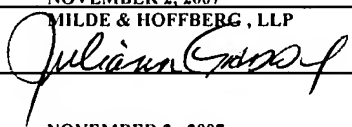
Respectfully submitted,

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